

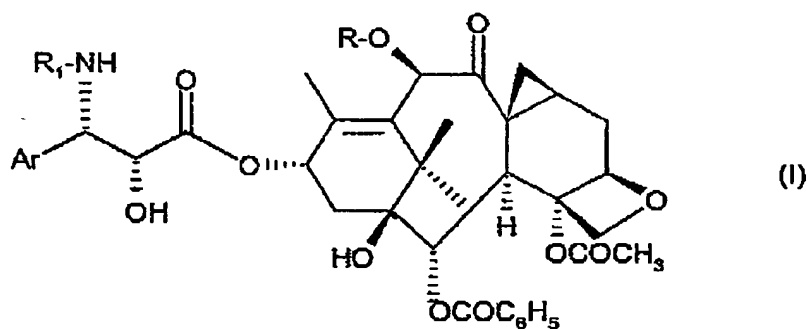
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Examiner: Owens, Amelia A.

Amendment Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121

IN THE CLAIMS:

The claims set forth below with amendments as indicated will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (I)



wherein:

Ar is aryl;

R is hydrogen, acetyl, alkoxyacetyl or alkyl;

R₁ is benzoyl or R₂-O-CO- wherein R₂ is straight or branched C₁-C₈alkyl;

comprising contacting compound of formula (II) with a weak base, then successively or beforehand, coupling a precursor of the side chain and, deprotecting the optionally protected hydroxyl functional group, which comprises carrying out the cyclopropanation reaction in ~~sulfolane~~; sulfolane;

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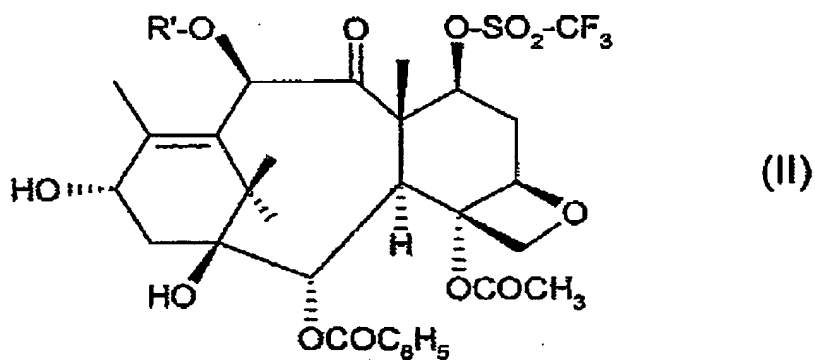
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8. (currently amended) The process as set forth in claim 7, wherein the sulfolane ~~comprises~~ is present about 4% of water.
9. (original) The process as set forth in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out at a temperature of from about 20°C to about the boiling point of the solvent.
10. (original) The process as set forth in claim 9, wherein the reaction temperature is about 60°C.
11. (currently amended) The process as set forth in ~~claim 1~~ claim 3, wherein the compound of formula (I) is isolated as a crude product by addition of ethyl acetate to the reaction medium, filtration of the molecular sieve, concentration of the reaction medium and then crystallization by addition of water.
12. (original) The process as set forth in claim 11, wherein the crude product is further purified by recrystallization from a solvent or solvent mixture chosen from methanol, a mixture of methanol and diisopropyl ether, a mixture of methanol and toluene, a mixture of sulfolane and toluene, a mixture of methylene chloride and diisopropyl ether, or a mixture of ethyl acetate and diisopropyl ether.
13. (original) The process as set forth in claim 12, wherein the crude product is purified with a mixture of ethyl acetate and isopropyl ether.
14. (original) The process as set forth in claim 13, wherein said solvent mixture is present in a ratio of approximately 25/75 v/v.
15. (currently amended) The process as set forth in claim 1, wherein the precursor of the side chain is chosen ~~by derivatives of~~ from β -phenylisoserine protected in the 2' position, oxazolidines or β -lactams.

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(III)

comprising bringing a derivative compound of general formula (II)



17. (original) The process as set forth in claim 16, wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of 4 Å molecular sieve as activated powder.

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18. (currently amended) The process as set forth in claim 16, wherein the sulfolane ~~comprises~~ is present from about 2 to about 5% by weight of water.
19. (currently amended) The process as set forth in claim 16, wherein the sulfolane ~~comprises~~ is present about 4% of water.
20. (original) The process as set forth in claim 16, wherein the reaction is carried out at a temperature of from about 20°C to about the boiling point of the solvent.